

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 9 and 15, and cancelled Claims 2 and 3. Claims 1 and 4-18 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 9, and 15 are independent claims.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative during the personal interview held January 18, 2006. The present response summarizes the substance of the interview. At the interview a proposed amendment to the claims was presented for discussion. Proposed Claims 1, 9 and 15 set forth a barrier system having, inter alia, first and second fence panels, each panel having first and second ends. The first end of the first panel includes at least one connector projection, and the first end of the second panel includes at least one connector slot. When coupled together, the first ends define a cavity therebetween that circumscribes an existing fence post. Arguments were advanced that the applied prior art to Brema et al. failed to show the original claim limitations and moreover, as proposed. The Examiner indicated that the proposed amendment to the claims define over the applied prior art of record, pending further search and consideration. In addition, the Examiner proposed consideration of U.S. Patent No. 4,038,802 to Bajorek et al. as teaching a cover formed of at least to interlocking members for substantially surrounding an existing bar.

The Examiner has required election among the inventions of Species I, Figs. 2-4, 9, and 12, and II, Figs. 5-7, 8A, 14 and 15. During a telephone conversation on August 30, 2005, Applicant's representative provisionally elected with traverse to prosecute the Species I, drawn to Figs. 2-4, 9, and 12, namely, Claims 1-3, 5, 8-12, and 15-18. This is to affirm the election. Claims 4, 6, 7, 13, and 14 were held withdrawn from consideration by the